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COMMUNITY MEDIA & Government Access

THE JOURNAL OF THE ALLIANCE FOR COMMUNITY MEDIA ■ SPRING 2008

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Community Media & Government Access

UP FRONT

Alliance Board of Directors.....	5
Winds of Change <i>by Deborah Vinsel</i>	6
Government Access Programming: Are You Watching? <i>by Matt Schuster</i>	7
Government Access Television: More Than Meetings <i>by Ross Rowe</i>	9

FEATURES

PEG Tripod Needs Three Legs <i>by Mark A. Hart</i>	10
Video Voter Creates Opportunities <i>by Betsy Rosenfeld</i>	13
Lost Access in Indiana <i>by Erik Möllberg</i>	15

GOVERNMENT ACCESS TELEVISION PROFILES

Station Profile: Louisville Metro TV <i>by Matt Schuster</i>	18
BevCam: The Citizens' Choice <i>by Walt Kosmowski</i>	19
The Importance of Purpose <i>by Mark J. Flynn</i>	21
The New Government Access <i>by Lauren-Glenn Davitian</i>	24
Elk Grove Village, Illinois <i>by Ross Rowe</i>	27
Enumclaw City Television <i>by Jon Funfar</i>	28
Government Programming on Chicago Access	
Network Television <i>by Czerina Salud</i>	29
Creating a Regional Network <i>by Tom Ireland and Andy Valeri</i>	32



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From the Interim Executive Director

Winds of Change

■ BY DEBORAH VINSEL



As a 25-year member of the Alliance, Deborah Vinsel has served on the Central States, Western Region, and Northwest regional boards and on the National Board of Directors. In 1999, the Alliance recognized her commitment to the organization by honoring her with the Buske Leadership Award. In 2003, she was co-chair of the local planning committee for the national conference held in Tacoma, Washington. In addition to serving as the interim director, Deborah also coordinates the Hometown Video Awards. Deborah has worked in community media since 1983, managing PEG access centers in three different states. She is currently the executive director at Thurston Community Television in Olympia, Washington.

I write this article with mixed feelings. Although I welcome the task as part of my role as interim director of the Alliance for Community Media, I do recognize that this may be the only opportunity I have to use this column to address you. The Alliance board is conducting a search for a new executive director, and the next issue of the *CMR* will have his or her first letter to you. So, hello to all of you, and thanks for sharing this moment with me.

I recently spent an inspiring and humbling weekend at the National Conference on Media Reform. The conference, sponsored by Free Press (www.freepress.net), brought together 3,500 passionate media activists to discuss media reform. It was made clear that we have a better chance now than ever before to effect positive change as we look to a new administration in Washington, D.C.

The Alliance was well represented by members from all over the country. As PEG people, we all know that access centers practice media reform every day by empowering our communities and individuals to speak for themselves. And, while PEG issues were more visible at this year's Conference on Media Reform program than they have been previously, our movement was overshadowed by net neutrality and media consolidation—the primary concerns for those gathered at the meeting.

Why, when the winds of change have become a fan for media reform, are we not recognized as an important and effective tool to be used to promote and implement reform? Why, with more than 30 years of growth despite all that has been thrown at us, are we dismissed with the admonishment that “the Internet will take the place of PEG?” Why, with the hundreds of thousands of hours of locally created, locally presented, locally **relevant** programming aired on our channels each year, do policymakers not recognize

that PEG is a significant response to the loss of localism in mainstream media and enact rules that protect us, instead of protecting the conglomerates that wish to eliminate us? **We** deserve a seat at the table of media reform, not just the scraps left over after the feast!

There were some bright spots at the conference, however. Through the efforts of Barbara Popovic from CAN TV in Chicago, a private meeting with Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Commissioners Jonathan S. Adelstein and Michael J. Copps was arranged to present information about the harm caused to PEG access in states with statewide franchising. The commissioners heard our concerns and confirmed their support for PEG. And, more importantly, they asked for our help to frame the message and provide statistical and verifiable information detailing our concerns. The commissioners also encouraged us to make a concerted effort to inform and educate our local, state, and national leaders about our cause.

One way to get the word out about PEG is by participating in the Keep Us Connected campaign. The Alliance Public Policy Working Group has done Herculean work planning the campaign, which launches at the 2008 National Conference and Exhibition in July. You are asked to take part by visiting your representatives and senators if you attend the conference in Washington, D.C., or by making an appointment with their staff in your state if you are not attending. For more information about how you can participate, go to www.alliancecm.org and follow the links to the campaign web page.

Our elected representatives won't act on our behalf if we don't ask them to. “The winds of change are blowing,” said Commissioner Copps. It is up to us to determine their direction. ■**CMR**

From the Board Chair

Government Access Programming: Are You Watching?

■ BY MATT SCHUSTER



I started working in government access television as a non-paid intern in 1994, while working on my master's degree in telecommunications at Michigan State University. As an eager graduate student looking to gain as much hands-on experience in video production as possible, the opportunities were endless. Little did I realize that this internship would be my introduction to the field of community media, and that I would still be working in government television more than ten years later.

I like to call local government programming one of our “dirty little secrets” because more people find themselves engaged and interested in the programming than they care to admit. Community media programming is often the punchline of people's jokes—“Wayne's World” is still fresh in people's minds. When asked, many people will not readily admit to watching this programming on a regular basis. However, I often hear those same people comment on something they watched the other night when they had a hard time falling asleep, or when they were channel surfing. And many people mention how they found themselves watching the local city council, whether for entertainment or information.

Many of us who work in community media know about this secret and the surprising number of people who watch the programming. Viewership surveys conducted in numerous communities have supported the idea that our work reaches many local viewers. In fact, the number of viewers often matches those of programs rated in the top 50 on cable.

With the cost of traditional television ranging from \$73,000 per minute and up, and the costs of new “serialized” web video ranging from \$1,400 per minute to \$2,200 per minute, local government programming may


be one of the best values there is for programming. Where else can you find, for example, gavel-to-gavel coverage of local government meetings, election coverage of local races, and information from the health department and other city agencies? All this programming happens with yearly budgets that are often less than the average cost of a 44-minute serialized drama on commercial television.

The value that government access programming adds to communities cannot be measured. Today, local government channels are creating innovative programming that reaches beyond the standard approach of providing access to the local government and a conduit for elected officials to express their views. Local government channels are serving as agents of change in their communities. Whether you want to participate in your democracy by watching elected officials in action, or improve your health by learning how to cook more nutritious meals, or find some tips to be “more green,” local government programming is your source.

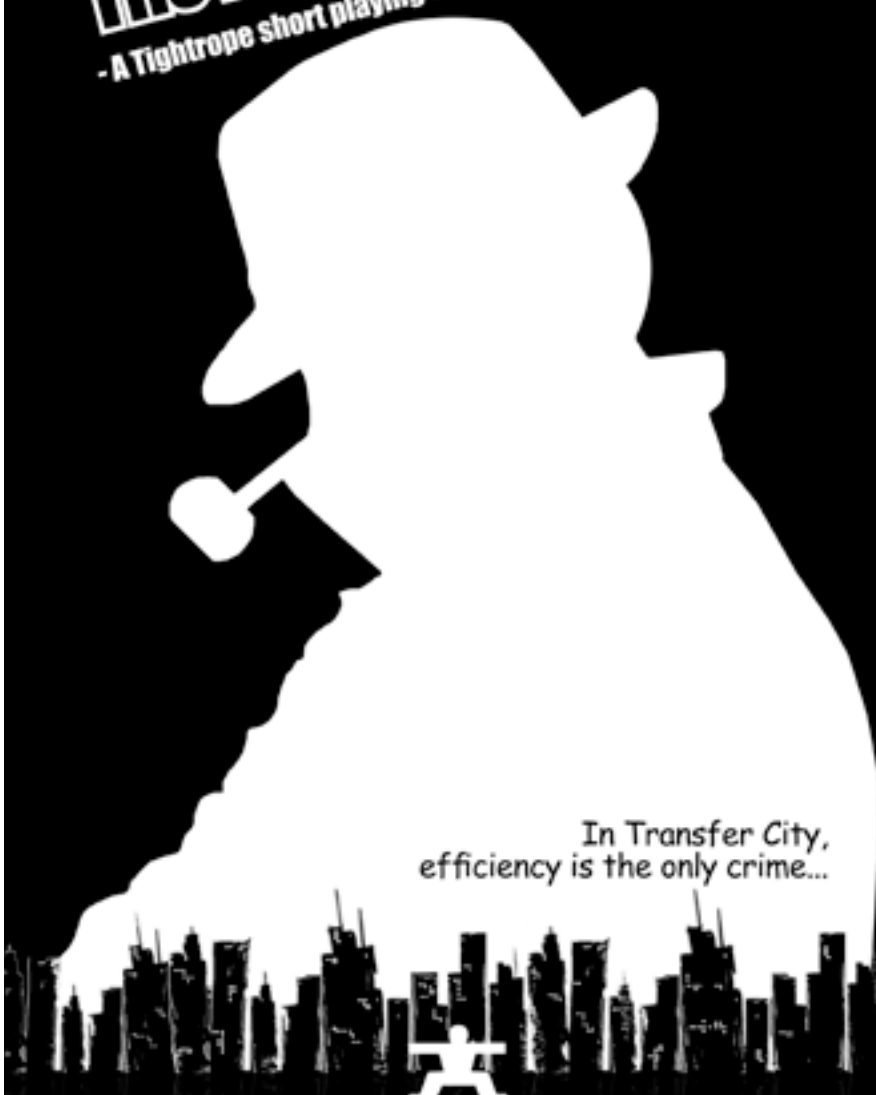
Those are just a few examples of the diversity of programming that can be found on local government access channels throughout the country. So I ask, “Are you watching?” ■CMR

Many of us who work in community media know about this secret and the surprising number of people who watch the programming. Viewership surveys conducted in numerous communities have supported the idea that our work reaches many local viewers.

Matt Schuster is chair of the ACM Board of Directors. He manages the national award-winning government access channel MetroTV in Louisville, Kentucky. Previously, he was cable TV coordinator/station manager for Lake County, Illinois, and Meridian Township, Michigan. All three channels received multiple national awards from NATOA and the Alliance's Hometown Video Festival, including Overall Excellence in Government Programming. Matt also serves on the ACM Central States Region Board. He received his Master of Arts in Telecommunications from Michigan State University. Contact him at matt.schuster@louisvilleky.gov.



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From the Guest Editor

Government Access Television: More Than Meetings

■ BY ROSS ROWE



Most of the time when the words “government access” are mentioned, an image comes to mind of people in suits sitting in wood-paneled rooms talking about easements, street resurfacing, and other equally riveting subjects. But as most of us PEG professionals know, it is much more than that simple description. Government involvement in PEG covers a dizzying range of community activities and information, which we showcase in this issue of *CMR*.

Inside you’ll find a listing of PEG channels that provide federal officials with an opportunity to relate directly to their constituents and examples of how that relationship has benefited their respective organizations, including CAN TV in Chicago and CCTV in Burlington, Vermont.

Profiles of government PEG channels from around the country show how different communities approach coverage of government activities. **Mark Flynn** profiles City of Tampa Television (CTTV); ACM Chair **Matt Schuster** profiles Louisville Metro TV; **Walt Komowski** gives us a look at government access in Beverly, Massachusetts; and I toss in our approach in Elk Grove Village, Illinois, at EGTV.

Mark Hart provides a thought-provoking article on PEG and how all three types of access must work together to keep our operations strong. **Tom Ireland** and **Andy Valeri** of MVCC relate how a regional broadband network is being created and operated in the city and suburbs of Dayton, Ohio. **Erik Möllberg** writes about how PEG operations

Government involvement in PEG covers a dizzying range of community activities and information, which we showcase in this issue of CMR.

in Indiana have been affected by state franchising laws, along with the best photo *ever* published in *CMR*!

All in all, a lot of great information follows about the state of government access within the current regulatory climate. Remember, whether your operation is public, educational, government, or a combination of these, we are all in the same boat and must all work together to survive and thrive. I hope this issue of *CMR* inspires you and reminds you of what we’ve accomplished so far, and about how very far we still

must go in the face of an ever-changing, ever-evolving climate.

Stay strong, true believers....

Ross Rowe, *Guest Editor*

Ross Rowe is the cable production coordinator for the Village of Elk Grove Village, Illinois, and manager of EGTV Channel 6, Elk Grove Village’s government access channel that has won numerous Hometown Video Awards, including Overall Excellence in Government Programming in 2006. Ross has been involved in PEG since the late 1970s as a undergraduate at Michigan State University. He has developed and managed access facilities in East Lansing, Michigan; Fort Wayne, Indiana; Ann Arbor, Michigan; St. Louis, Missouri; Evanston, Illinois; and Mount Prospect, Illinois. Ross is a founding board member of the Michigan Chapter of the Alliance for Community Media, and served numerous years on the ACM Central States Regional Board. He is currently a member of the ACM Midwest Region Board. You can contact Ross at rrowe@elkgrove.org.

PEG Tripod Needs Three Legs

May Be Lifeboats for Big Media's Sinking Ships

■ BY MARK A. HART

Corporate consolidation of media has negative effects on consumers and PEG access.

Like legs on a tripod, public, educational, and government (PEG) cable channels need to stand together or they may fall alone in the face of regressive legislation and hard economic times.

In addition, mainstream media downsizing makes causes related to open government and free speech like PEGs especially important now. Nowhere is that more apparent than in Florida, long a leader in media trends and where the state Consumer Choice Act of 2007 has potentially legislated PEGs out of existence.

"The truth is that the bill is not consumer friendly and will not produce lower cable TV rates," said Louise Thompson, executive director of the Tampa Bay Community Network. "Along with removing local controls over rights of way, the bill negatively impacts local government revenues and the ability to monitor service, permits discontinuation of cable service to some residents, and does not guarantee service to all residents," Thompson said. "Most importantly, the bill marks the beginning of the end of PEGs and, with that, Government-in-the-Sunshine and free speech on the cable-waves of Florida."

The Tampa Bay Community Network is now the only public access channel remaining in Florida. In addition, by 2012, Florida PEGs may be retained only by a majority vote of *all subscribers*—not just all poll respondents—in a given service area. That's like asking political candidates to garner a majority of all registered voters, rather than just those who cast a ballot.

In addition, PEGs in Florida now must comply with programming requirements not applicable to commercial TV; specifically, they must be on-air at least 10 hours daily, with at least five hours of non-reruns and excluding "bulletin board" announcements. That's an

especially heavy burden on educational and government access.

Elsewhere, Illinois' model cable franchise bill ensures that PEGs can't be "channel-slammed" into harder to find triple-digit, high-tier channels unavailable to basic subscribers lacking converter boxes. Other affected states should follow suit by adding legislative provisions, if needed, to prevent PEGs from being numerically separated from other basic service channels. In addition, cable franchise laws that allow for elimination of PEGs, as well as for minimum programming requirements, should be amended.

Meanwhile, the national flagship for converging print, TV, and online news operations is apparently sinking in Tampa. Media General Inc. announced first quarter earnings declines earlier this year attributable to Florida operations. In addition, it recently offered buyouts and severance packages to Florida employees as a cost-savings measure. Three newly elected Media General board members have thus vowed to have the *Tampa Tribune*, WFLA-TV, and TBO.com properties sold. Perhaps they should be. Research by advocacy group Free Press shows that cross-ownership tends to stifle competition. Other TV stations in the market often find they can't compete with a cross-owned TV station. So they cut their local news coverage up to 25 percent in favor of sports, weather, and entertainment.

Most people rely on TV for local and national news, but cross-owned operations don't necessarily report more local news when combined than they would have separately. So the prospect of the *Tampa Tribune* ceasing publication is alarming in what is arguably the state's most competitive media market by virtue of its daily competition with the *St. Petersburg Times*, which also faces downsizing. *Times* Editor Paul Tash recently expressed cautious

optimism that Florida newspapers, once called “the best under the sun” by *Time* magazine, will eventually recover from the downturn. He also called for new measures providing greater citizen access to public records, as well as for requiring local governments to provide time for public comment at all meetings. If he fully understood the situation of PEGs, Tash might have called for more protection of PEGs as well.

There are many other reasons to be concerned about the effects on journalism of major corporations taking over U.S. and international media. Red flags abound. For example:

- *Chicago Tribune* Company CEO Sam Zell harshly criticizing the chain’s Washington, D.C. bureau for not being a profit center and covering the war in Iraq too much.
- *Wall Street Journal* business reporting being down 50 percent since Rupert Murdoch took over.
- Content analysis showing 60 percent of the news articles in better British newspapers are rehashes of public relations releases.

British author Nick Davies has a name for what’s happening—“churnalism,” as detailed in his book *Flat Earth News*. According to Davies, one by-product of churnalism is “flat earth news,” or major stories the public believes are true when in fact they are as false as a flat Earth, like the Y2K scare or weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. Davies writes:

In the book, I’m arguing that the commercialism of our corporate owners has undermined journalism in numerous ways. The most important single example is the structural change that they have inflicted on us, cutting back our editorial staffing and increasing



our output and thus reducing dramatically the time that we have to find and check stories. Generally, this tends to reduce reporters to a passive role, recycling wire copy and PR material, often without really checking it. And in that context, it becomes much easier for intelligence agencies, government PR officers, et al., to manipulate news coverage to serve their political interests.

Broadcast media are not immune from the effects of churnalism. For example, as recently reported in the *New York Times*, retired military officers with close ties to the Pentagon and defense contractors are being booked for network TV interviews as “independent” analysts without media checking into their backgrounds. The story followed other reports that the venerable CBS News, once among the most important powers in American media, was considering subcontracting assignments to CNN, a proposal former anchor Dan Rather said would drive him to drink.

Many local performers now rely on lower power FM community radio or public access TV to showcase their talents.



Mark A. Hart is statewide organizer for the Florida Media Coalition, a pro-media advocacy group based in Tampa. He is the former public information officer for the School District of Hillsborough, and is currently organizing political candidate debates for the League of Women Voters to be aired on The Education Channel, the Tampa Bay Community Network, and City of Tampa TV.

But perhaps nowhere are the effects of “Big Media” more generally apparent than in the rise of Clear Channel Communications and the fall of commercial radio. In the new book *Right of the Dial: The Rise of Clear Channel and the Fall of Commercial Radio*, author Alec Foege contends that while Clear Channel perhaps didn’t ruin commercial radio, it came pretty close. Once comprised of 2,000 radio stations nationwide, Clear Channel economized by centrally automating music and news, which Foege contends was good for investors for awhile but bad for citizens and American culture over time. Now some 1,200 stations strong, Clear Channel is successful, controversial, and reviled in the music industry. As one reviewer wrote, it is “American commerce and culture gone mad.”

In Clear Channel markets, local performers who once got the air time needed on hometown stations to attract a following got forced out in favor of music from corporate dictated playlists. Many local performers now rely on lower power FM community radio or public access TV to showcase their talents. Yet public access channels remain the most vulnerable PEG channels, especially in states with programming requirements that preclude reruns and bulletin board announcements in calculating air time for original content programming.

Nonetheless, cable franchise agreements that allow for PEGs to be retained only by a majority vote of either all subscribers or respondents to a survey threaten all three PEGs, not just public access, especially if they are “channel slammed.”

The situation is a far cry from the early 1980s and the advent of cable TV heralded

by Ted Turner, when he started CNN against all odds. Experts said CNN was as doomed to failure as Al Neuharth’s *USA Today*, also launched in the 1980s. Both CNN and *USA Today* not only succeeded but flourished. But media giant Time-Warner now owns CNN, and Gannett Co. Inc., parent company of *USA Today*, is no longer the nation’s only publicly traded daily newspaper chain.

Then, PEGs were touted as the great promise of cable franchise agreements with local governments because of their ability to provide the average citizen with greater opportunities to become active and involved in civic and public affairs.

One of the simplest, yet most compelling, calls to action for local government access channels in response to the Florida Consumer Choice Act of 2007 was made by Anthony Riddle, former executive director of Alliance for Community Media. “And when you, the governor, or the mayor of a small town, or a legislator needs to frame the debate for his or her constituents, won’t it be important to have an unfiltered connection to your community?” Riddle asked.

Overall, the new video franchising framework must include stronger build-out requirements and consumer protections. Most anti-redlining provisions are insufficient to ensure low- and middle-income consumers are not left behind. New franchising processes must sustain and support the continued viability of valuable local public services such as public access television, institutional networks, and consumer protection. ■CMR

Video Voter Creates Opportunities

PEG Helps Voters Make Informed Choices

■ BY BETSY ROSENFELD

Video Voter: Producing Election Coverage for Your Community can be downloaded at www.videovoter.org.

Dateline 2008. The relationship between America's community television producers and its cable companies can be described as adversarial at best. Public, educational, and government (PEG) producers complain that cable companies resist providing PEG channels, supply sub-par facilities, discourage access programming and oppose the dedication of channels to the public interest. Cable companies grumble that that PEG channels contain boring, irrelevant, poorly produced programming and that the presence of PEG channels usurps channel capacity, preventing them from broadcasting revenue producing programs.

Instead of dissecting these arguments, or taking sides, this article aims to encourage both camps to move past the animus, and to do so soon. By working together *now*—combining the strength of cable companies' distribution and PEG's grassroots knowledge and community relationships—cable can offer customers/viewers something they won't be able to get from a satellite or telephony provider: high-quality localized programming. Such a service may be

just the advantage cable companies need to stay ahead of their competitors, which is good for the cable companies and good for community TV producers. A shrinking market-share would mean shrinking resources for PEG. But how can these two sides come together?

The Center for Governmental Studies (CGS) is a nonpartisan, foundation-funded nonprofit organization with 25 years of experience working with cable companies and new media outlets to create innovative voter information and civic engagement programs. In the early 1990s,

CGS created the California Channel, California's State Public Affairs Network, which is now funded and run by California's cable companies. In the late 1990s, CGS launched DNET, the first of its kind voter information website that allowed candidates to debate one another online. Then, in 2004, CGS launched Video Voter, an award-winning voter education initiative working with PEG and other nonprofits to create local and state voter information, which is delivered over multiple distribution channels, including cable television, cable video on demand (VOD), and the Internet.



Video Voter Creates Opportunities (*continued*)

Based on this extensive experience, CGS proposes that cable companies and PEG producers coordinate their efforts by producing and marketing local and state voter information programming. Specifically, CGS recommends creating short-form distribution-friendly formats as outlined in its 2004 book, *Video Voter: Producing Election Coverage for Your Community*, and as produced and improved by the center since the book's release.

Video Voter has worked closely with community producers and cable companies across the country. Video Voter co-produced New York City's 2005 municipal election programming, which gave more than 100 candidates the opportunity to present themselves in a two-, three-, or four-minute statement (the length depended on the office the candidate was running for.) In California, Video Voter worked with Santa Monica City TV to develop new formats and produce innovative election programs. In Los Angeles, CGS worked closely with LA36, Los Angeles' educational channel, to produce *Voter Minutes*, award-winning short-form pieces on California's extremely complicated ballot measures which are produced for each election cycle.

LA36 features the *Voter Minutes* both on their channel and their site. In 2005, recognizing how many other outlets could benefit from the programming, CGS began distributing them free of charge to PEG channels, cable VOD, and even NPR stations, such as Pasadena City College's KPCC, which runs them on their website. While not a revenue source, with this additional distribution (facilitated by the fact that the pieces were short and thus, VOD and web friendly), CGS has created a dynamic marketing opportunity for LA36. It

also created an opportunity for cable to give its customers localized content they couldn't get anywhere else. Carol Dahmen, political marketing manager at Comcast Spotlight, says, "projects like *Voter Minutes* provide great opportunities to enrich our customers' cable experience, work with community producers, and utilize new technologies such as VOD to offer truly localized political coverage, a service that broadcast and satellite cannot provide."

The most successful of CGS' synthesizing cable/public interest programs was *Nevada '08: A Video on Demand Voter Education Initiative*, which helped Nevadans prepare for their January 2008 Presidential Caucus. The project was made possible through a collaborative effort between Cox Media, Charter Communications, National Cable Communications, and CGS.

CGS produced two five-minute video on demand tutorials offering information on how to participate in the state's caucus—one for the Republican Caucus and one for the Democratic Caucus (the caucuses ran quite differently from one another). The segments, which were produced with a modest budget, featured man-on-the-street questions followed by answers from a party representative taped in front of a green screen. Additionally, the spots were translated into Spanish to cater to the many bi-lingual and Spanish-speaking residents of the state.

The tutorials were placed on Cox and Charter Cable's VOD systems. Then, during the twelve weeks leading up to the caucus, 24 cable TV channels aired a CGS-produced educational spot, *What is a caucus?* Depending on the cable provider, links or messages in the spot allowed viewers to access the tutorials.

All in all, these tutorials were viewed in over 23,000 homes. Party organizations, volunteers, labor unions, and special event fundraisers took it upon themselves to promote the programming. This gave voters an opportunity to better understand the caucus process and, more importantly, gave cable an opportunity to invest in the community.

These video voter efforts, which synthesized the efforts of cable companies and community television, demonstrated that coming together to create political programming is a win-win endeavor. ■CMR



Betsy Rosenfeld is project director for Video Voter and other media projects for the Center for Governmental Studies (CGS). She is responsible for developing CGS' innovative voter education project, Video Voter. Rosenfeld co-wrote *Video Voter, Producing Election Coverage for Your Community*, a comprehensive guidebook for producers seeking to create innovative voter information programming. Before joining CGS, Rosenfeld worked as a producer in both television and film. Rosenfeld holds a master's degree in communications from the Annenberg School for Communications at the University of Southern California, as well as a bachelor's degree from the University of Pennsylvania's School for Communications.

Lost Access in Indiana

State Franchising Law Erodes PEG Access

■ BY ERIK MÖLLBERG

In March 2006, Indiana's state franchising bill—HB 1279—passed into law over the numerous objections of many PEG access TV providers through some questionable eleventh-hour constitutional maneuverings on the statehouse floor. The bill affected much more than just state video franchising; it also encompassed new telephone regulation language and wireless technology. The dramatic effects of the telephony deregulation, such as the removal of anti-redlining provisions, will not be felt by citizens of Indiana until 2009. This behemoth 130-page bill was more than the legislators could understand or appreciate and yet it was approved in a very short legislative session.

The first red flag was the assurance of both of the bill's co-authors that PEG access was protected by provisions of the bill. The danger to PEG access became more apparent during the legislative hearings, where industry representatives were given one hour each to "debate" the pros and cons of the bill, while only 15 minutes were allotted for comments before the general assembly to the "consumer/citizen interest groups" who were directly affected by the state franchising and other major telecommunications regulations. Even over our objections to the vague and passive language in the bill, this juggernaut led by AT&T rolled through both houses of the legislature. At one point during the debate, former Representative Dan Coats was brought in as a supporter of the bill. Why it was important to have Coats, then the U.S. Ambassador to Germany, speak to the importance of telephone deregulation and state video franchising escaped our collective minds.

Now, two years have passed and HB 1279 has caused not only irreparable harm to all of the PEG access centers in Indiana, but also has resulted in the closing of several PEG

access centers operated by Comcast in the northwest part of the state. The remaining operational PEG access centers (not under direct cable company control) are facing drawn-out hearings before the Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission, eminent legal court proceedings, and the loss of all capital monies. We watch in horror as our facilities slowly "fade to black" through the attrition of dying equipment that cannot be replaced.

In August 2007, ten Indiana municipalities received the same letter from Comcast Cablevision's regional headquarters, stating that Comcast was "relieved" of providing PEG access facilities in their communities because of language in the new franchising bill. In their interpretation, franchise fees and channels were specifically described in the bill, but facilities were only mentioned by the word "facility" and not described in more detail. In their letter, they gave the cities 30 days to find housing for the production and playback equipment previously at the Comcast head ends in their area, after which Comcast would cease providing production services for their respective communities served.

On September 28, 2007, Comcast closed the PEG production facilities it had managed under the terms of now voided local cable franchises in the following communities: South Bend, Mishawaka, Plymouth, Goshen, Elkhart, Valparaiso, Hammond, Portage, East Chicago, and curiously, Edwardsburg, Michigan. On December 18, 2007, programming playback for these channels was terminated in these communities. They were left with a three-color community calendar message simply identifying the channel as public access.

In Bloomington, Indianapolis, and Fort Wayne, the video providers of Comcast Cablevision, Verizon, and AT&T have failed to deliver the capital monies required of the

Changes to state franchising laws can drastically reduce PEG access.



Erik Möllberg is chair of the Indiana Chapter of the Alliance for Community Media.

The IURC has reported to the legislature that consumer cable complaints have risen nearly 27 percent in Indiana.

current video provider. However, HB 1279 clearly requires that this obligation be met. The companies' rationale is that those monies were paid in past franchise agreements and they do not have to pay them pursuant to their new state franchise agreements—playing both sides of the card. While there is specific language within HB 1279 along with a formula on how these monies are to be paid on a per-subscriber basis, the municipalities and PEG access operations are left to debate this critical portion before a judicial body.

Then there is Richmond, Indiana, where Brighthouse Cable (soon to be Comcast) deployed voice over Internet protocol (VOIP) and has subsequently, though not surreptitiously, degraded the playback signal for live location shoots and live playback of city council meetings for the PEG access channel. After almost nine months, this situation has yet to be satisfactorily resolved, despite the outrage from viewers and city officials.

In Union City (which straddles the Ohio and Indiana state lines), Time Warner Cable strung a new cable system and denied the local PEG access facility access to the local cable drops. Kiss TV, which operates from the local high school, would have used this access provide the community with live playback of city council meetings. Yet Time Warner is suggesting they do not have to provide access to the backfeed lines as per both the Indiana state franchising and the Ohio state law.

Finally, the Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission (IURC), which is responsible for administering HB 1279, does not believe that they have the authority under the state-franchising bill to arbitrate these issues. The IURC has reported to the legislature that consumer cable complaints have risen nearly 27 percent in Indiana. When questioned about how they were dealing with the complaints,

the IURC responded that they did not have the authority to "do anything about it."

The IURC has consistently directed any local franchising authority that has difficulty with any video provider to seek legal counsel and approach the courts for relief. This push for litigation unfairly places fiscal obligations on already strapped local franchising authorities who, when faced with arduous monetary obligations for relief, will be forced to accept the limited and substandard level of service being offered to them.

In an earlier meeting between the IURC and the Indiana Chapter of the Alliance for Community Media in 2007, members of the IURC's new telecommunications division admitted that the ambiguous language within HB 1279 made it necessary to begin a rule making process to rectify some of the bill's perceived inequities. As of this time, no such hearings have been held and the destruction of PEG access has continued.

Members of the Indiana chapter of the Alliance for Community Media have engaged their city officials in organizational meetings to explore next steps. In May, the chapter convened a meeting with a variety of municipalities and the Indiana Office of Utility Consumer Counselor (OUCC) to determine our course of action. The OUCC is the state agency representing utility ratepayer interests (including residential and business consumer interests) in cases before state and federal regulatory commissions.

We are now pursuing efforts to encourage the IURC to begin investigating these issues and we are now poised to bring the telephone and cable companies providing video services in Indiana to the bargaining table and restore PEG access provisions. ■CMR

Government Access Television Profiles

Different communities mean different approaches. Government access television exists in all different shapes and sizes, from the largest cities to the smallest rural towns. I like to tell people that my job is to let the residents of my community know what they are getting for their tax dollars. The following articles showcase a wide array of operations run by municipal governments, nonprofits, and other organizations, and how they make the most of their resources to provide successful community coverage for their residents. Enjoy...



Station Profile: Louisville Metro TV

Staff: 5 FT ■ Budget: \$310,000

■ BY MATT SCHUSTER

Louisville MetroTV was launched in 2001 as Greater Louisville Television by the Louisville Board of Aldermen to increase transparency in city government. When the City of Louisville and Jefferson County governments merged in 2003, the channel and operation were relaunched as MetroTV to emphasize a broader, community-wide mission. We then eliminated the use of a graphic bulletin board in favor of airing programs and public service announcements.

Louisville MetroTV's mission is to make Louisville-Jefferson County Metro government more accessible and understandable to the citizens of Louisville; to inform residents on metro government, government services, and community life; and to facilitate the exchange of public information. We produce a wide range of programming to meet the strategic goals of metro government, working with a number of agencies to highlight their programs and promote their services.

Through more than 245 hours of meeting coverage each year, we provide the public with countless opportunities to see their legislative body in action. Recently, residents could watch complete coverage of the budget hearings; full discussion and hearings surrounding a proposed smoking ordinance and a trans-fat ban ordinance; and debates on downtown arena financing and public financing of major downtown developments.

We also covered community-hosted forums on these and other topics. In addition, we work with numerous agencies to produce public service announcements highlighting a domestic abuse hotline; the "Keep Louisville Safe" campaign; city parks profiles; the healthy hometown movement; anti-litter initiatives; and promotion of community events.

MetroTV provided full coverage of more than 125 press conferences, so residents could view the entire context of the events, including questions from the media. This provided residents with a valuable tool to gain more information than the 30-second sound bite on the nightly news.

We worked with Metro Government agencies to produce programming related to safety initiatives—including what to do when you hear the emergency sirens—and Internet safety tips. We also produced segments to increase community awareness on downtown development, city initiatives, and educational initiatives. In addition, we produced a series of cooking segments to promote healthy eating using food from area farmer's markets as part of the Mayor's Healthy Hometown Movement.

We have also launched additional programming with our city departments and agencies to help them communicate on issues, such as the *Health Matters* series, and a talk show with the mayor called *Community Conversations with Mayor Jerry Abramson*.



Beyond working with government agencies, we developed programming in collaboration with community groups to provide more exposure for their activities. This included working with the Kentucky Opera, highlighting the ballet, and sharing clips from performing arts groups throughout the area. We also collaborated with the local public radio partnership to provide video of select programming to help public radio programs reach a different audience.

We provided in-depth coverage of local public forums and events on topics including the death penalty, the library referendum tax, 40 years of open housing, and Internet safety. In addition, we increased residents' exposure to national and international figures, including former Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev, Apple Computer co-founder Steve Wozniak, and Nicholas Kristof, a *New York Times* reporter who spoke on the situation in Darfur.

Louisville MetroTV provides video programming 24 hours a day, seven days a week. MetroTV provided countless hours of free airtime to government agencies and departments to communicate with the community, which would not have been possible through other means. ■CMR

Matt Schuster is chair of the Alliance for Community Media's Board of Directors. His full bio appears on page 7.

BevCam: The Citizens' Choice

■ BY WALT KOSMOWSKI

When Mayor Bill Scanlon of Beverly, Massachusetts, recently addressed a special meeting of the city council, he began his remarks with, “Honorable Council, members of the school committee, fellow citizens both here in city hall and *at home watching on television...*”

On another occasion, City Council President Tim Flaherty, commenting on public attendance at municipal meetings, offered, “I have talked to many people throughout this community who have a difficult time getting down here *who watch on the TV at home.*” Appearing before the Zoning Board of Appeals, architect David Jaquith related how watching BevCam coverage helped him and his client prepare a pending application, saying, “*TV has helped.*”

These are examples of the impact cable access station BevCam (Beverly Community Access Media) has had on the community through its coverage of local government, municipal events, and political issues. From regular live broadcasts of city council and school committee meetings, to special programming covering public debates, election campaigns, and other timely political topics, BevCam has become a focal point for citizens of Beverly who want to be kept informed on issues involving their community.

To add immediacy and value to its coverage, BevCam was instrumental in setting up the council chamber in Beverly City Hall for live broadcast. The room was equipped with a robotic three-camera system and a cabinet at the back of the chamber housing a complete cablecast set up. It is connected via iNET to the cable company (Comcast) head end. With a flick of the modulator switch by a crew member, gavel-to-gavel coverage of proceedings are beamed live to Beverly residents.

A recent decision by the city council to approve the first-ever city-wide referendum on a controversial tax increase aimed at balancing



the school budget caused a whirlwind of activity—debates, forums, and the formation of quickly organized ad hoc groups, all aimed at influencing public opinion. BevCam’s comprehensive television coverage of these events was eagerly watched and analyzed by the voters trying to get all the information needed to make an informed decision.

During local election campaigns (whether for state representative, mayor, or city councilor), BevCam—in association with the League of Women Voters—has sponsored an ongoing TV series called *Conversations with the Candidates*. These programs are produced in the BevCam studios. Office-seekers are interviewed by impartial panels and can give their views on political issues facing the city. These have become de rigueur watching for Beverly residents, who get a candid look at the people running for office. The candidates, realizing the value of this television exposure, are eager to participate and, of course, be given equal air time. This past year, BevCam scored a coup by interviewing the Massachusetts gubernatorial candidates.

During the 2007 city council and mayoral contests, BevCam produced special live TV

Office-seekers are interviewed by impartial panels and can give their views on political issues facing the city.

BevCam: The Citizens' Choice *(continued)*

Because it strives to be impartial and objective, BevCam has gained the respect and following of the community as a credible source of information on political matters.

coverage from City Hall on election night. BevCam commandeered a small room off the main hallway to set up broadcasting gear contained in a custom-made studio-in-a-box, which includes preview and program monitors, switchers, cg monitor, audio mixer, and intercom. They ran BNC and XLR cables through a window on the first floor, up the outside of the building to the third floor city council chambers, where the permanent link to the cable company head end is located.

As ballot boxes came in from the various city wards, a tote board was updated on screen as the votes were counted and posted by the city clerk. As these events unfolded, an on-air host took viewers behind the scenes and explained the process. As the evening wore on and the polls closed and the results became apparent, both winning and losing candidates came down to City Hall to express thanks to the voters or congratulate the winners.

Thanks to BevCam, the citizens of Beverly had a front row seat to the finish of an exciting political campaign and election.

Because it strives to be impartial and objective, BevCam has gained the respect and following of the community as a credible source of information on political matters. It has become a nexus for discussion and debate—a center for the transmission of ideas and consensus-building.

Describing the value of television coverage of political events, Beverly resident Mary Roderick said, “One of the wonderful things about BevCam covering the city council meetings is that people can sit at home and watch. In fact, I tape the meetings so I can watch when I can’t come here.”

It’s no wonder that in Beverly, Massachusetts, “I saw it on BevCam,” has become a familiar refrain when a political discussion starts somewhere around town. ■CMR



Walt Kosmowski has been in access media since 2002, when he started volunteering at BevCam in Beverly, Massachusetts. Under the tutelage of then-executive director Rob McCausland, he learned about all aspects of production. He produces and hosts *North Shore Journal*, and has produced special programs, including an ACM award-winning production. Kosmowski joined BevCam’s Board of Directors in 2004, chairing the development committee, increasing membership, and creating a successful sponsorship program. He has been elected by BevCam’s board to take over as executive director in August 2008.



The Importance of Purpose

A Profile of Government Access Excellence in the City of Tampa

■ BY MARK J. FLYNN

Nestled alongside an oak-shaded, riverfront park, in a quaint neighborhood of brick streets and bungalows, sits a building of historic significance. What once was part of the original Tampa Water Department is now the home of City of Tampa Television (CTTV). Enter the welcoming lobby and you are introduced to the station through its own significant past. In its twenty-three-year existence, CTTV has amassed a multitude of local, regional, and national awards that line the walls and fill the display case. Six of those awards bear the title “Overall Excellence in Government Access Programming” and come courtesy of the Alliance for Community Media (ACM). So what’s the secret of CTTV’s success?

“It’s simple, really,” explains Mindy Snyder, cable television manager for the Office of Cable Communication. “We hire enthusiastic people who love what they do. A highly creative staff of professionals is key to achieving any success in this industry. The information that we provide to our citizens is important and our staff is sensitive to the city’s mission and vision and finds effective ways to deliver that message in their programs.”

Every week, the eleven-member CTTV staff gathers to review assignments and exchange ideas. Each individual is heard from and all ideas are welcomed. At times, such meetings have found themselves concluding near the lunch hour. One recurring topic is *Spotlight Tampa*, the monthly magazine series that highlights de-

partmental services and events. It is here that ideas for the show are generated. Each individual in the room is responsible in some way for *Spotlight’s* success, whether by producing a segment or in the show’s promotion. During these meetings, the diversity of the group’s social and professional backgrounds shine.

“The people who work here all bring something unique to our station,” explains Snyder. “Television production is dependent on team players and the CTTV staff is one great team.”

Production Supervisor Tom Dea thinks that the variety of programming that CTTV provides to its citizens also has something to do with the station’s success. “It’s not all meetings, all the time, though Tampa City

Council and the other five publicly held meetings are really an important part of what we do here,” says Dea. “But the comprehensiveness of our programming line-up gives residents some really great choices, and makes it possible for every department to use our station to get their message out there.”

Programming at CTTV initially began with the taping of Tampa City Council meetings. Six months later, we began to telecast them live. Then, after completing basic video production training, city employees began to produce programs for the channel. Through the years, city bulletin board messages were replaced with locally produced programs. Today, the station produces eleven monthly shows, as well as public meetings, news con-



The CTTV studio.



Producer/Director Karey Poulos videotapes the opening ceremony of the Kaboom! project that took place in Tampa. Volunteers came together for this fun community event in order to construct an entire playground in a single day.

The Importance of Purpose (*continued*)

Producer/Director Zac Atwood videotapes Tampa Mayor Pam Iorio as she interviews the Tampa Bay Lightning's star defenseman #22 Dan Boyle. Boyle was recovering from a surgery in which tendons severed in his left wrist were repaired.



ferences, promos and public service announcements, election coverage, bulletin board messages, and a host of special event programs, with topics ranging from ethnic celebrations to programs honoring military veterans and public safety officers. In 2007, CTTV employees produced more than five hundred hours of original programming.

Among its regular shows, *The Mayor's Hour* provides a forum for Tampa Mayor Pam Iorio to speak to citizens on topics such as downtown development, the arts, and volunteering opportunities in the community. *Wildlife at Tampa's Lowry Park Zoo* features in-depth information about the animals and events at the park, which some call the most family-friendly zoo in America. The show also lets viewers see local conservation efforts in action. A large percentage of Tampa's diverse population is Spanish speaking. CTTV produces a show specifically designed to inform this vibrant component of our community, *¿Que Pasa Tampa?* One of the newest programs on the CTTV line-up, *Mayor's Book Talk*, is designed to encourage literacy in our community. A segment on the show pairs the mayor up with a group of active readers from a local middle school. Together they share their love of reading through engaging group discussion revolving around a youth-oriented book. The show uses the CTTV website (www.tampagov.net/booktalk) to reach a young audience by posting discussion questions for the chosen book. Tampa area schools encourage their students

to read along and prepare before the show by visiting the website.

Specials produced by the staff have focused on such important topics as how best to prepare for a hurricane and how to stay safe during the holidays. CTTV helps produce *Dreamers Against Drugs*, a play designed for children that stresses the advantages of maintaining a drug-free lifestyle. CTTV creates the mayor's annual *State of the City Presentation*, which highlights the community's accomplishments during the past year. The most recent budget presentation, *A Commitment to the Basics*, broke down proposed fiscal year spending so residents could see what improvements are being made with their tax dollars during these volatile economic times.

"In the universe of 200-plus channels, it is very important to ensure technical and efficient delivery of quality video and audio," said Dan Foglia, video technical support coordinator for the Office of Cable Communication. "Our administration realizes the need to attract viewers by providing the necessary resources and support with our acquisition of quality equipment."

To be sure, state-of-the-art production equipment plays a vital role in our success. Within the building there

are a total of six editing suites, all of which employ a networked Matrox Axio non-linear editing system with twenty-four terabytes of total storage. Also available for show production is a digital audio booth, multi-formatted dubbing system, and graphic packages featuring both Deko and Inscribe products. Programming and playback are done using the AIRO Automation system with a video server and an Odetics Acucart. Archived programs are currently being converted from VHS and BetaSP to DVD in order to preserve and protect this valuable historic record.

The sole studio is an expansive, multi-level facility equipped with pop-in set pieces, ample storage, a floor-to-ceiling chroma-key screen, and four Phillips studio cameras. In 2006, CTTV retired its 18-year-old production truck and purchased a brand new vehicle. It serves as the studio control room while at the station and can easily be rolled out to bring back quality programming from remote locations, live and taped. The new remote production vehicle has a hybrid design that supports both analog and digital capabilities. Two flat panel screens crown the primary wall of the interior and are able to support up to 32 video sources simultaneously.

Along with the visual upgrades, the new truck's audio capabilities have been improved as well. The vehicle boasts an enclosed audio suite that allows the technician to concentrate specifically on the sounds of the program, without the distractions of the busy TV crew inside.

"The passion that we, as producers, have comes from interacting with the people of Tampa," said Frank Crum, one of the four producers at CTTV. "We see through the lens of a camera and what we discover is that most people have a really good story to tell. As producers, we realize that we are privileged to be able to help them tell their stories in a way that benefits others."

As part of his responsibilities at CTTV, Crum helps some of Tampa's youth tell their stories. Mayor Pam Iorio created the Mayor's Youth Corps, an organization intended to connect teens of different backgrounds by getting them involved in their community, as well as in city government. Part of that involvement includes communication through local media. Crum works with the members of the Youth Corps to produce *From the Corps*. With his guidance, participants are directly responsible for the creation of the show's content from script writing and field reporting to the technical aspects of directing, operating the camera, and video editing. *From the Corps* targets youth with topics that are intended to inspire, praise, and connect teens to one another. Episodes have covered a variety of topics, such as deflecting

peer pressure, CPR training, choosing a college, and living with debilitating illnesses.

The ingredients for CTTV's success undoubtedly include its people, programming, production equipment, and the passion that exists for creating valuable programs. But the true key to success, the binder that holds it all together, is purpose. Our mission is to serve the residents of Tampa and to provide them with quality programming covering a broad range of government information. We keep the welfare of the people of Tampa at the forefront in everything that we do—with every show that we produce.

CTTV provides a vital service to our community, and we have estab-

lished a relationship with the people that we serve. The relationship is not one-way. Bi-annually, we conduct a viewership survey that not only tells us what our residents are watching and when, but what they want to see or why some of them are not watching us at all. That survey is a tool, a roadmap that we can use to achieve our mission.

What we are to Tampa is in our station's tagline: City of Tampa Television...Your City, Your Station. ■CMR

Mark J. Flynn is the public relations coordinator for the City of Tampa's Office of Cable Communication. He has been with the office since 1997.



Mayor Iorio chats with members of her book discussion group from Rampello Downtown Partnership School before the taping of CTTV's Mayor's Book Talk program.

The New Government Access

Vermont Communities Take Charge of their Telecommunications Services

■ BY LAUREN-GLENN DAVITIAN

It makes sense for us to start replacing the 5 percent PEG cable rule with a generalized share of the revenues from the entire network—video, voice, AND Internet. This would be a smaller percentage—but of a larger gross revenue from triple play services. This new “franchise fee” can result in the same amount of revenue for PEG. But rather than declining with the demise of cable TV, the revenue for public purposes can grow with the expansion of broadband internet service. EC Fiber plans to go forward with this proposal to the Vermont Public Service Board.

— Tim Nulty, EC Fiber

In the early 1980s, Bernie Sanders, the mayor of Burlington, Vermont, thought it would be a good idea to buy the local cable company. The Mayor’s Cable TV Task Force (convened to explore the idea) agreed, recommending that the city’s electric company do the job. Not surprisingly, Cox Cable balked and, ultimately, paid Burlington \$1 million NOT to pursue municipal cable ownership in the city of 40,000.

But the dream never died. In 1997, Burlington residents voted overwhelmingly to build a municipal telecommunications system. After various attempts to work in partnership with the private sector, the city hired Tim Nulty, a noted telecom start-up veteran, to get the project off the ground. The new city department, now known as Burlington Telecom (www.burlingtontelecom.net), was launched in 2001. That year, Burlington voters approved \$6.1 million in revenue bonds to finance the \$21 million project. Today, BT is a fully digital network with 100,000 channel capacity. BT is quickly building out to all parts of Burlington, currently serving one-third of homes passed and offering cable, high-speed Internet, and phone service at competitive market rates.

As a city-owned—rather than corporate—telecom company, BT works cooperatively with Burlington’s local access channels.

BT’s franchise with the state of Vermont requires it to provide 5 percent of its gross cable revenue for operating plus capital support for Channel 15 (VCAM), Channel 16 (RETN), and Channel 17/Town Meeting TV. Without the contentiousness typical of their dealings with Comcast (which serves 90 percent of Vermont), the public, educational, and government (PEG) operations have added channel capacity (Channel 317Live) and new applications (video on demand), plus moved operations with BT’s support.

Burlington’s vision for a publicly owned and controlled telecommunications system has inspired other access centers and communities across the state. The City of Montpelier and 22 of its rural neighbors voted this year to join EC Fiber (www.ecfiber.net)—a regional collaborative set to bring voice, data, and video services to the rural households and businesses of central and southeastern Vermont. The project, started by Valley Net (originally a community based dial-up ISP), is in the midst of raising \$70 million in order to build out service to 23,000 rural households.

Tim Nulty, Burlington Telecom’s founding director, now works for EC Fiber, the East Central Vermont Fiber Project. Given the interest in local telecom emerging from all corners of Vermont, his goal of bringing

open access to all corners of the state may be realized. Nulty recently spoke at the annual meeting of Vermont's Access Network (a close association of the state's 25 community access management organizations) and shared his views on the future of telecom, along with a radical new proposal for protecting PEG access funding in a rapidly changing telecommunications environment.

CMR: Why is Burlington Telecom a model for other communities?

The Burlington Telecom network is based on four principles: universal service to all residents, financial self-sufficiency without taxpayer subsidy, open access to all on a non-discriminatory basis to utilize and re-sell services, and future-proof so that it will last for the long term.

As of today, 96 percent of the network has been completely built out. We expect BT to break even and become profitable before the end of 2008 (four years from the start). This is highly unique for a capital infrastructure project of this size.

CMR: Tell us more about EC Fiber.

I left BT so that we could clone the model around the rest of Vermont. EC Fiber includes 23 members that voted their support (95 to 100 percent) in a March 2008 referendum. As a rural telecom project, it will line 1,500 miles of road. We expect to become profitable halfway through fifth year. No taxpayer money will be used and it is expected to make a profit for the communities. Despite the tough economic outlook for the nation, we have been encouraged to submit the proposal to the financial markets and expect to raise the capital in nine months. EC Fiber will start

hooking people up within one year of that.

It was said that BT was a special case because it was a city and easy to build out. EC Fiber is characteristic of most of Vermont and we expect to demonstrate that a triple-play broadband service can be successful in rural communities. This is good news for the other Vermont communities that are interested in moving ahead. Once EC raises its funds, the interest in these other communities will galvanize and spread.

CMR: What does this mean for the state of Vermont?

This model is viable—economically and technically—and can be built throughout the state. But the incumbent players are not going to sit by and lose their business. Most of the time the incumbent players try to stop the project through political means—as Adelphia (now Comcast) tried to do in the face of Burlington Telecom. They were not successful. So their next strategy is to upgrade and build their own digital networks. The key is that these companies (Comcast, Fairpoint) have to respond to our model; our projects must be well-established and correct. Our success with BT and EC Fiber will drive competitors to include the fundamental principles of *Universal Service* and *Open Access*.

Why is our model vital at this time?

Because private, investor-owned networks are not typically interested in *universal networks* that cost more to operate. They won't go universal unless they have to. Regarding open access, funds are being spent all over the United States and in Washington, D.C., to defeat "network neutrality," also known to us as "common carriage"—a concept that dates very

Lauren-Glenn Davitian is the executive director of CCTV's Center for Media & Democracy (www.cctv.org), which manages Channel 17/Town Meeting TV (www.channel17.org) in Burlington, Vermont. Channel 17 is a "bottom-up" government access channel that serves the people and local governments of seven communities in Chittenden County, Vermont. Every month, Channel 17 produces and airs 100 hours of meetings, events and public issue coverage that are carried by Burlington Telecom and Comcast. Channel 17's seventeen years of programs can also be searched, ordered, and watched at www.channel17.org.

far back in our history. Carriers have always hated to do common carriage.

But think of the opportunity we have to promote universal access and open networks: the push for broadband access is global. Today 70 million [customers] have broadband service and we expect this to expand at a rate of 40 to 50 percent a year. If these models are established, competition *will* work and there will be a patchwork of public companies and private companies that reach all of the people with an open architecture. This is, in fact, a very American way of doing things.

CMR: What's in it for PEG access?

The cable TV model as we now know it is unraveling and will disappear over the next 10 years. It will not likely exist in its current form (technical, marketing, tier structure). Cable TV will become a less important network in how we interact with the communications media in general.

But PEG is tied to the cable industry as it now exists. The question is: How do we move with the world, protect access and not get tied to a declining communications model? Because PEG has a very great interest in being tied to a communications system that has vast and varied ways for the community to get its message out, it makes sense for us to start to replacing the 5 percent PEG cable rule with a generalized share of the revenues from the entire network—video, voice, AND Internet. This would be a smaller percentage—but of a larger gross revenue from triple play services.

This new franchise fee can result in the same amount of revenue for PEG. But rather than declining with the demise of cable TV, the revenue for public purposes can grow with the expansion of broadband Internet service. EC Fiber plans to go forward

with this proposal to the Vermont Public Service Board.

CMR: What can PEG access centers do to prime their communities for public open networks, universal access, and a percentage of all telecommunication network gross revenue?

Most communities have activists who are open and interested in public broadband ownership. It is a good thing to agitate for a project like Burlington Telecom. It is less important that every community has a facility that is publicly owned than it is to ensure that all systems operate with the standards of universal service and open networks.

Keep in mind there will be a political campaign against this work. Knowing that, it is important to be critical in your thinking and smart with your organizing. Build a broad base of supporters: schools, libraries, nonprofits, government agencies, small and large businesses. Make the case for access, universal service, and open networks. Generate discussion. Talk about the models that are working. Paint a picture of the future based on an open telecommunications network.

Let's look at two areas of immediate impact: Does an open telecommunications network have an economic impact on school costs and health care costs? Student populations are declining and the cost per pupil is going up. Add this to the fact that people are less likely now to move to a community that does not have broadband. Communities now understand this and are saying, "We need this to keep people from moving and to keep our schools open!" Add this to the many emerging and established distance-learning projects that were not possible before.

Broadband also has the capac-

ity to deliver virtual and immediate health care, particularly for elderly people or disabled people. Check-ups, monitoring vital signs, and other routine services are now possible in the broadband community. Unlike cable companies, who find this onerous, we find these applications to be a great opportunity to make a case for rural broadband and our model in particular.

CMR: What is your view of the future?

In the broadband world, "triple play" services are a throwaway commodity. The fiber pipe to your home costs \$50 to \$80 per month but the pure marginal cost of delivering Internet and phone service is \$5 a month. Cable TV costs more because of the program fees, but in the future we will find companies that charge customers for access to the pipe/broadband connection and "throw in" voice, Internet, and video services.

As we speak, smaller, locally owned Vermont cable systems such as Waitsfield Cable, Topsham, and VTEL are all looking at fiber networks. The state's major cable players, Comcast and Charter, are thinking about fully fiber networks because their business is seriously threatened by Verizon's FIOS networks in different parts of the country. Fairpoint (formerly Verizon in Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine) has stated that it will not build fiber to the home. But when they see their competitors doing it, they will have to.

As a result, in the future, we will see fiber [going] into every home in Vermont. The opportunity is in place for Vermont's PEG access organizations. If we seize it, we will change the world of access completely and expand the public service we can offer our communities. ■CMR

Elk Grove Village, Illinois (EGTV)

23 Years of Government Access Excellence

■ BY ROSS ROWE

Under the direction of the Elk Grove Village manager's office, EGTV administers, produces, programs, and promotes the village's municipal access cable channel, EGTV Channel 6. Primary responsibilities include:

- Creating, producing, doing post-production, promoting, and scheduling of programming that highlights village policies, procedures, and events—including live coverage of village board meetings, park board meetings, and other live programming.
- Creating and scheduling of village and community messages on the channel's announcements board, which is shown when programming is not being cablecast.
- Providing video services (duplication, technical assistance, etc.) to village departments.

In 1985, the Elk Grove Park District proposed to Elk Grove Village that they be allowed to use Channel 6—which had been broadcasting alphanumeric messages only since 1982—for the cablecast of community programming. A partnership was formed, with the village providing capital seed money to establish a production facility in a park district building and providing operating funds from cable franchising fees.

By 1988, the park district had formed a community network with the surrounding communities of Palatine, Rolling Meadows, Buffalo Grove, and Hoffman Estates, Illinois, to produce programming of regional interest. In 1990, a viewership survey sent to residents by the Elk Grove Village president and board of trustees showed that 54 percent of respondents watch Channel 6 on a regular basis. In 1994, the network was dissolved and the park district committed Channel 6 to 100 percent Elk Grove Village programming. The channel then moved to a facility at the pavilion building.

In 2003, the park district board decided to end its management of Channel 6, and offered the channel to the village board to manage. The village moved the production facility to the fire administration building and built new studio, office, and editing facilities. The village changed the channel's focus to a direct municipal access channel. It signed an agreement with high school district 214 to

establish a studio facility at Elk Grove High School, as well as advising a class on media production. Elk Grove Village residents rely on EGTV Channel 6 as their most important source for local information.

The Alliance for Community Media (ACM), the national organization that represents public, educational, and government access programming both nationally and internationally, selected the Village of Elk Grove Village—EGTV Channel 6 as the winner of its Hometown Video Awards Overall Excellence in Government Access Award for 2006 in the \$200,001–\$499,999 budget division. ■CMR

Ross Rowe is the cable production coordinator for the Village of Elk Grove Village, Illinois, and manager of EGTV Channel 6. His full bio appears on page 9.



Enumclaw City Television

Enumclaw, Washington

■ BY JON FUNFAR

The City of Enumclaw, Washington has a population of 11,200 and is situated about 45 miles southeast of Seattle in the foothills of the Cascade Range and Mt. Rainier. It has had government access television since 1997 via TCI (Tele-Communications, Inc.), which is now Comcast Cable.

Enumclaw City Television (ECTV) is a division of the city's administration department. It broadcasts on channel 21 within city limits, with meetings streamed on demand via the city's website. ECTV is truly a one-man operation. Media Services Manager Jon Funfar divides his time between ECTV, the city's website, and telecommunications duties. Funfar, who is currently chair of the Alliance for Community Media (ACM) Northwest Region, has been with the city since 2000, and grew up in Enumclaw.

ECTV provides government access for the city, so its primary programming is related to city government—city council meetings, planning commission meetings, and city-sponsored events. Also, ECTV supports the Enumclaw School District through taping school board meetings, school performances, and *Superintendent's Update*. In addition, ECTV accepts programming from outside governmental sources, including the state of Washington, King County, and the federal government (e.g., *Army Newswatch*).

ECTV's mission is to bring city government to the citizens via television, including programs like *Mayor's*



Update. Through ECTV, residents view meetings that deal with important everyday concerns, such as taxes, utility rates and capacity, planning and land use, parks, and senior/youth center issues. In addition, programming from the school district connects residents with educators and elected school officials. Finally, programming connects residents with the community, via the Fourth of July celebration, holiday parade, candidate forums, and other local events.

In the last four years, ECTV has won several awards: two Honorable Mentions for Overall Excellence in Government Access in the Home-town Awards in 2007 and in the 2006 NATOA Government Programming Awards. It also won the Overall Excellence Award in PEG programming from the ACM Northwest Region in 2006 and "Best of the Northwest" awards from the ACM Northwest Region for the *Enumclaw Video Voter's Guide* in 2004 and 2006.

Enumclaw City Television oper-

ates out of Enumclaw City Hall, with master control, editing, and council chambers camera control located in the ECTV office. Master control consists of a Leightronix Nexus server with three tape/DVD sources. When taped programming is not being aired, a Scala IC5 bulletin board system is shown. Editing is primarily done with Final Cut Pro, with acquisition primarily done with a JVC GY-DV5100 camera. Council chambers meetings are shown via three Sony BRC-300 remote cameras, fed into a NewTek TriCaster system.

With an operating budget of about \$89,000, ECTV is funded out of the city's general fund, where the 5 percent cable franchise fees are placed. In 2005, Enumclaw also received a one-time \$50,000 capital payment as part of the 1995 franchise. That payment is being passed through as a \$.25 per month "Franchise Cost" fee until the end of the franchise in 2010. ■CMR

Jon Funfar is the Media Services Manager for the City of Enumclaw. Part of Jon's varied duties is operation of Enumclaw City Television, government access for Enumclaw and cable franchising. An ACMNWR board member since 2001, he is currently Chair for the regional board.

Government Programming on Chicago Access Network Television

Bringing Chicago Residents Access to Local, State, and Federal Information

■ BY CZERINA SALUD

Chicago Access Network Television (CAN TV) is an independent nonprofit organization established in 1983 to administer and promote the use of Chicago's public access channels. This unique communications resource belongs to the people of Chicago and has become a lifeline for thousands of Chicago residents and nonprofits.

CAN TV programming helps viewers find jobs, locate HIV/AIDS and domestic violence counseling,

access art and educational resources, interact with local public officials, and experience a diversity of viewpoints. Its five channels are more than 90 percent local and reach over a million potential viewers.

CAN TV's schedule includes thousands of hours of public and educational programs, along with a wide range of government programming at the city, county, state, and federal levels.



CAN TV Board Member, Warner Abrams and 50th Ward Alderman Bernard L. Stone on CAN TV's weekly live call-in series Political Forum.

CITY OF CHICAGO ON CAN TV

City of Chicago aldermen use CAN TV extensively to reach their local constituents. City departments using CAN TV include the Chicago Public Schools, Department of Aging and Chicago Housing Authority.

Local program highlights on CAN TV include:

- Six Chicago aldermen produce regularly scheduled programs on ward activities.
- During the 2007 municipal election, CAN TV aired 125 hours of election programming representing 100 candidates.
- CAN TV's volunteer board members host *Political Forum*, a weekly live call-in program, now in its 16th year, which features Chicago aldermen, state legislators, and members of the Illinois congressional delegation.
- *The City Club of Chicago Presents: Inside Chicago* features more than 35 programs annually with city officials and civic and community leaders.
- For the past eight years, the Chicago Board of Elections has educated voters on the election process prior to major elections.

- Viewers learn about HIV/AIDS prevention, risk reduction, and treatment on *AIDS Call-In Live*, now in its 16th year, featuring the Chicago Department of Public Health and nine other local health organizations.



The Chicago Department of Public Health brings HIV/AIDS information to Chicago viewers.

COOK COUNTY ON CAN TV

County involvement includes elected officials, judges, and agencies such as the Sheriff's office, State's Attorney's office, and Clerk of the Circuit Court.

County program highlights on CAN TV include:

- During the 2008 general primary election, CAN TV cablecast 108 hours of election programming for county, state, and federal offices representing 84 candidates.
- For six years, Clerk of the Circuit Court Dorothy Brown has given viewers the opportunity to call into her agency's live show to get information about record expungement, child support, and the other services available through her office.
- *City Club of Chicago Presents: Inside Chicago* featured the Cook County Board President Debate, the Cook County Assessor, and the Cook County Chief Financial Officer.



The Developing Justice Coalition's State's Attorney candidate forum.

STATE OF ILLINOIS ON CAN TV

Members of the Illinois Congressional delegation and 12 different state agencies, such as the Illinois Department of Employment Security and the Department of Children & Family Services, make use of CAN TV.

State program highlights on CAN TV include:

- The Governor's *State of the State* address was carried live on CAN TV21.
- The Illinois Channel provides weekly coverage of legislative committee hearings, executive and judicial branches of state government, and public policy events across Illinois.
- The Lieutenant Governor discussed his Sustainable Energy Plan Initiative.
- The Department of Public Health's weekly live series addresses the prevention and control of diabetes in conjunction with four local health organizations.



CAN TV covered multiple sessions of the Illinois Legislative Latino Caucus during this day-long conference.

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT ON CAN TV

The *Chicago Tribune* recently highlighted the U.S. Postal Service's involvement at CAN TV with Jeff Coen's article, "Public TV becomes tool to fight fake checks" (March 10, 2008).

Fourteen different federal agencies use CAN TV, including the Department of Environmental Protection, Social Security Administration, and Department of Veterans Affairs.

Federal program highlights on CAN TV include:

- The U.S. Postal Inspection Service educates viewers on postal fraud, fake checks, and other issues.
- For eight years, Congressman Danny K. Davis (7th) has given Chicago residents the opportunity to call into his weekly live program, *Listening to the People*, to discuss community and civic issues.
- For twelve years, the U.S. Social Security Administration has educated the public on changes to Medicare, retirement benefits, and other services. Programs are presented in both English and Spanish.
- U.S. Customs and Border Protection educates viewers on the work of various federal agencies as part of its live, call-in series.
- CAN TV provided complete coverage of the Federal Communications Commission hearing about media ownership and consolidation. Commissioners heard testimony from hundreds of Chicagoans. ■CMR



U.S. Customs and Border Protection invited the Department of the Interior's Fish and Wildlife Services Office of Law Enforcement to talk about items made from endangered species that were confiscated at the border.



City Club of Chicago Presents: Inside Chicago featuring U.S. Senator Richard J. Durbin.

FCC Commissioner Michael J. Cops speaks at the September 2007 FCC hearing held in Chicago.



Czerina Salud [csalud@cantv.org] is the communications manager for Chicago Access Network Television (CAN TV).

Creating a Regional Network

Providing for Civic and Economic Development Through Information Technology

■ BY TOM IRELAND AND ANDY VALERI

A small investment in an electronic superhighway can lead to huge rewards.

Imagine discovering that your community has a large number of roads and highways that you hadn't known were there. Imagine finding out that these thoroughfares were located in all the right places to not only relieve traffic congestion, but that any vehicle traveling on these roads is non-polluting and always reaches its destination in less than a tenth of a second no matter how heavy its load. Finally, imagine that the only thing required to enable use of these roads is to build the final intersections connecting each of them to the rest of the world's highway system.

That is the happy situation the Miami Valley region of Western Ohio is in. The City of Dayton and its neighboring communities have literally hundreds of miles of government-owned fiber optic telecommunications cable already in the ground and on municipally-owned poles. This cable traverses thoroughfares bordered by schools, colleges and universities, hospitals, government agencies, nonprofit institutions, public access media centers, research facilities, convention centers, emergency response service centers, and more.

By providing for the attachment of the proper telecommunications switching and routing equipment, this fiber can be utilized to transmit voice, data and video information at gigabit or even tens of gigabit rates. The financial investment to activate this heretofore unused electronic superhighway in Dayton and the eight suburban communities immediately to its south which comprise the member municipalities of the Miami Valley Communications Council (MVCC) is about \$2 million—less than the cost to repave two miles of state highway through an urban area. This network can be readily completed and brought fully online in service to these local communities within two years with the provision of the necessary political and financial investment.

This wealth of unused fiber optic telecommunications infrastructure provides a spectacular opportunity for a quantum leap in the economic, civic, and cultural development and well-being of the local communities we serve. The real-world implications of the deployment of such network capabilities for these communities is tremendously exciting. This holds just as true for other communities around the nation that are pursuing the successful fulfillment of a regional network vision similar to what is currently being developed in southwestern Ohio.

With a comparatively modest investment of time and financial resources, we will be able to provide a publicly managed information infrastructure with such massive information carrying capacity that it can make the barriers of distance virtually disappear. Educational assets and capabilities will be exponentially increased as schools of all levels attached to the network can electronically share expert instructors and whole classrooms even though the students and instructors are miles away from each other. Students and instructors can interact on video and graphics systems as if they are in the same room, with the opportunities for the best educators in a region to be able to be accessed by students no matter where they are. Local experts from industry or research institutions or anywhere in the world with the technological capabilities can be brought into the classroom to share their real-world experiences.

Doctors in hospitals separated by long distances can collaborate on difficult cases, sharing information and ideas over video systems, passing electronic documents back and forth as if they were standing side by side. Research and development facilities at opposite ends of the region will be able to work on projects as if they were in collocated laboratories or

offices. For instance, the massive amounts of data required to build mathematical models of new designs can be shared across the gigabit rate fiber highway between powerful electronic applications separated by miles, but interact as if that separation was measured in inches. The result would be faster development of new systems among physically separated teams of collaborators. In this gigabit metropolis, the research collaborative could spawn cottage industries.

Most communities in the Miami Valley have their own emergency response services, as does the Montgomery County. In the Miami Valley region, this extensive resource of telecommunications fiber runs directly adjacent to six of the ten local and regional emergency dispatch centers. The aforementioned \$2 million investment needed to launch this system will extend its reach to all of the emergency dispatch centers at gigabit rates and along diverse paths that will provide more survivability for its infrastructure. During a regional emergency, this electronic highway can be a secure and dependable conduit of information that can continue to operate if the public communications systems fail or become saturated with traffic.

The electronic highway also serves as a cultural asset for the region. The currently unused fiber in our region runs adjacent to a major convention center, a nationally renowned art institute, several theatrical playhouses, three major performing arts centers, a downtown creative arts gallery and production studios district, a public television facility, multiple PEG access facilities operating a score of community channels among them, and more.

The ability of this telecommunications system to carry information is such that each of these could simultaneously transmit high

definition video signals to a common head end and still only consume a fraction of the carrying capacity of the system. The creative potential inherent in accessing this capability in service of the arts and our local civic culture is truly inspiring. Citizens could participate in the culture of their community from anywhere in the connected region.

Why A Publicly-Owned Network?

The term “electronic highway,” though clichéd, still serves as a highly appropriate and effectively descriptive analogy in explaining the purposes of not only the Miami Valley Regional Network currently in development in Ohio, but similar networks developed around the nation (and the world, for that matter). Virtual networks projecting into the future can and do result in the same kinds of long-term positive return on investment for the participating and connected communities as traditional physical highways. The virtual network highway, when designed appropriately and efficiently, provides for the virtually unlimited movement of voice, data, and video traffic between as many unrestricted destinations on this highway as possible, just as the physical highway system allows vehicles of just about any size and nature to move about.

These networks should be built and overseen by governments for the same reasons the publicly owned and controlled commonwealth of our road and highway infrastructure is. For instance, market solutions simply are inadequate or incompatible in properly addressing underlying fundamental principles of democratic governance and civic principles of equality and inclusion. However, we should have government-owned broadband networks not simply because of feel-good philosophy, but based on a dollars and cents (or should that be “dollars with sense?”) accounting issue.

Office-seekers are interviewed by impartial panels and can give their views on political issues facing the city. These have become de rigueur watching for Beverly residents, who get a candid look at the people running for office.

One of the most challenging aspects of the effective development of regional networks is successfully translating the vision to local community leaders.

Governments (and the public's commonly owned wealth with which they are entrusted) cannot afford to lease from private telecommunications companies the critical mass of bandwidth required to make a private network an economic development tool for the region's citizens whom they represent.

Some enlightened public servants throughout government have recognized that they simply cannot afford the results of not investing in these network highways, any more than they can afford not to invest in an effective and usable physical highway system for their region. However, these government-owned electronic highways can often be run in concert with support from private enterprise in a public/private partnership, just as we have government-owned physical highways. This partnership can satisfy the need for massive bandwidth at affordable rates while assuring that local carriers benefit from use of telecommunications channels that otherwise would not be available to them.

Even with the various unique characteristics involved with what MVCC is attempting to develop here, related forms of regional and municipal networks of this type have already been and are being built in an increasing number of locations across the country and around the world. This is most likely not news to a good portion of the readers of the *CMR*, particularly those involved in related projects in their own communities or aware of the kinds of networks one can find in the Twin Cities region in Minnesota, for instance, or the exciting new statewide public broadband initiatives under way in Vermont.

Each network has its own distinctive features and capabilities, reflecting the needs and resources inherent in each community. Sharing each community's common visions and unique experiences in the creation and sustenance of these networks can be tremendously valuable in helping each other to navigate the

challenges and impediments faced when trying to implement these vitally important systems.

Challenges To Success

One of the most challenging aspects of the effective development of regional networks is successfully translating the vision to local community leaders. Local officials may be much more experienced in the problem solving processes inherent in managing tangible items like roads and sidewalk maintenance, parks and recreation facilities, police cars and fire equipment, employee management procedures, and the like. Even intangible assets, like easements and rights of way, can be physically defined and more easily understood than a virtual network carrying content and commerce that admittedly has little historical precedence.

In our own experience here in the Miami Valley, this intangibility has been a significant impediment to realizing the full potential in economic, as well as civic and cultural, development that such a regional network clearly offers. Though these publicly-owned broadband networks offer an unprecedented opportunity, they are not in and of themselves a visible product in the traditional sense of a municipal asset.

City managers and mayors tend to want to talk about the operational cost reductions that can be gained from using a government-owned fiber optic highway versus leasing commercial services, where the financial result can be easily and immediately seen at the bottom of a spreadsheet. Yet the real return on investment of a regional broadband telecommunications network is its ability to attract new commerce and new civic and cultural contributors. That has shown itself to be a major hurdle for building political support in the Miami Valley among those who measure success in this month's quarterly report, rather than envisioning the shape of their community ten and twenty years from now. It is politically

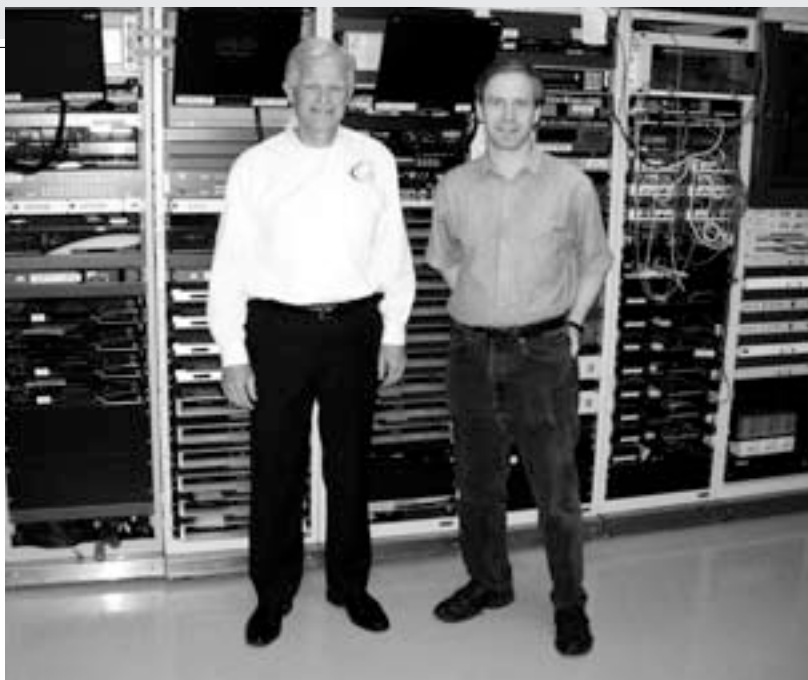
easier to approve \$1 million for a recreational facility that has much less economic development benefit than a regional network that can bring the capabilities that have been briefly described above.

After all, the recreational facility can be seen and a creative photo op can be easily arranged for its debut. A broadband network, however, is invisible and intangible—in the jargon of the technologist, virtual. While the financial benefit to the community may be orders of magnitude greater than any single physical structure developed within a community, it can be amazingly difficult to sell this awareness to municipal and regional leaders who have no frame of reference for the benefits that can be realized.

Sharing The Vision

Meeting this challenge can be the single most important task in the successful development of a locally-based public broadband system, even more so than any specific technical hurdle or economic limitation. Returning to the highway analogy may illustrate the challenge of generating cooperation among sibling municipal and township governments that may perceive inequities in investment versus return within the region. Completing a section of highway may cause traffic to pass through, instead of to, a city. The same thing is true with networks.

Why would a local government invest in completing a section of a network within its boundaries when the greater beneficiary may be the neighboring township? The answer is the same as it is for highways. The sharing of costs and the investment in the short term may not be fair among sibling government agencies. However, the economic benefit to the region of investing in physical and electronic highways is so large in comparison to the cost that the inequities end up looking small in comparison to the economic benefit.



Municipal leaders often want to be told about cost reduction, particularly during an economic downturn, yet there can be no significant cost reduction without widespread cooperation directed towards a collective regional vision. A key component to effectively engineering such an endeavor is having a readily recognized regional leader publicly champion the project. This buy-in can be essential to moving the project forward, though in the end, it has to be a bottom-up initiative.

What often needs to be done, and what is currently being pursued in support of the Miami Valley Regional Network initiative, is that the vision and the plan must be sold meeting by meeting, day by day, taking to the streets in laying the groundwork to build the support and grassroots cooperation for the vision. This can be done in numerous ways, including selling the vision at public forums, through your local access channels, via the press, through interacting with local business and civic groups. Eventually, a high-profile champion from either the business or government sectors (or both) will step forward—or be nudged forward—to lead the region in this initiative. He or she will rally the various entities that will allow the project to work effectively under a common vision and purpose.

Movements are not created by leaders, but rather they achieve success when leaders appear after a critical mass of energy has organized around a principle and an ideal. It

As amazing and profound as the opportunities inherent in these types of broadband networks are for local communities, there is even greater potentiality on the horizon.

is often then that the right leader will step in and step up to fully represent and define that vision. This leader can unite all the parties involved in a way that transforms the initiative from inspirational concept to effective political action.

That vision entails understanding that each of the systems included and each of the participants involved are simply elements of a much larger integrated system which can be a mechanism for regional collaboration on a massive scale (sort of like the notion of democracy). The myriad entities involved and the services they contribute can be interconnected with each other to create a new kind of community. All of this government-owned fiber highway can be used to the benefit of telecommunications carriers, the local business community, and the citizens to make all of us more available to each other and to provide unprecedented access to services and information. With the proper vision, and the will to execute that vision, we can create a new kind of regional community that can experience great economic development and civic and cultural transformation through the use of information technology.

The Next Step

While all of this isn't necessarily the whole story, it isn't the end of the story, either. As amazing and profound as the opportunities inherent in these types of broadband networks are for local communities, there is even greater potentiality on the horizon. For the Miami Valley, the installation of this regional network will put us on a par with several of the better connected communities in the nation and around the world. It will allow us to stay competitive in a world that values transportation of information as much, if not more than, it values transportation of goods via truck, planes, and trains. A rapidly transforming world where free and open exchange of information among individuals will become neces-

sary for our collective well-being and perhaps even survival itself. The progress taking place in the telecommunications world continues at an extraordinary pace that the Miami Valley and all communities willing and able to embrace and incorporate those capabilities into their civic and economic infrastructures will be well positioned to take advantage of.

In a few parts of the world, the Internet is taking the next evolutionary step toward what is being called "The Grid." In these locations, extremely fast telecommunications routers and switches are connected to dedicated fiber optic cable to provide information transfer at rates far greater than is experienced over the typical Internet connection. Since the backbone of the Miami Valley regional network is fiber, and because there is so much of this fiber available, we have the opportunity to create a regional grid that can attract enterprises that need to work in this type of collaborative infrastructure.

By developing regional, publicly-owned broadband networks, we can take the next major (r)evolutionary step in what our common work in community media has always been about—building and sustaining participatory societies through the use of media technology.

All we have to do is collectively decide to create and participate in this new community. ■**CMR**

Tom Ireland is the chief technology officer for the Miami Valley Communications Council, and coordinator of the Miami Valley Regional Network initiative. If you would like more information regarding the network's development, contact him at tireland@mvcc.net.

Andy Valeri is programming supervisor at the Miami Valley Communications Council. A long-time veteran of community access media, he currently serves on the editorial Board of the CMR. He can be reached at avaleri@mvcc.net.

Introducing Our New Brand!



TURN IT ON™

FULFILL THE
TRUE POTENTIAL
OF HYPERLOCAL
BROADCASTING



TELVue HELPS HYPERLOCAL
CHANNELS PROVIDE A BETTER VIEWING
EXPERIENCE THROUGH OUR DIGITAL BROADCAST
EQUIPMENT AND BULLETIN BOARD SOLUTIONS.



THROUGH EFFICIENT AND VALUE-ADDED
WORKFLOW OPTIONS, TELVue MAKES HYPERLOCAL
CHANNELS EASIER AND LESS EXPENSIVE TO OPERATE.



THROUGH OUR SUPPORT OF KEY PEG INITIATIVES
AND THE DEPLOYMENT OF EMERGING MEDIA TECHNOLOGIES,
TELVue HAS A CLEAR VISION OF THE INDUSTRY AS A WHOLE.

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Alliance for Communications Democracy



For more than 15 years, the Alliance for Communications Democracy has been fighting to preserve and strengthen access. Though the odds against us have been high, and the mega-media, corporate foes well-heeled and powerful, time and again we've won in the courts. We can't continue this critical work without your support. With the ramifications of the 1996 Telecommunications Act still manifesting themselves, and new legislation on the horizon, we must be vigilant if we are to prevail and preserve democratic communications. If not us, who? If not now, when? Please join the Alliance for Communications Democracy today!

Become an Alliance Subscriber for \$350/year and receive detailed reports on current court cases threatening access, pertinent historical case citations, and other Alliance for Communications Democracy activities.

- ▶ Voting membership open to nonprofit access operations for an annual contribution of \$3,000.
- ▶ Associate, Supporter and Subscriber memberships available to organizations and individuals at the following levels:
- ▶ Alliance Associate \$2500 – copies of all briefs and reports.
- ▶ Alliance Supporter \$500 – copies of all reports and enclosures.
- ▶ Alliance Subscriber \$350 – copies of all reports.

Direct membership inquiries to ACD Treasurer Sam Behrend, Access Tucson, 124 E. Broadway Blvd., Tucson, AZ 85701, telephone 520.624.9833[x103], or email at sam@accesstucson.org

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